

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 1-37, 46-47, and 49-66, without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter presented therein.

Please amend Claim 43 and add new Claims 67-72 as follows.

1. - 42. (Cancelled)

43. (Currently Amended) A maintenance apparatus comprising:

reception means for receiving date information and addition level information of information to be added to an image by an image forming apparatus which electro-photographically forms a toner image;

determining means for determining based on the received information, a date at which notification recommending correction of the addition level is to be sent to the image forming apparatus; and

transmitting means for transmitting the notification to the image processing apparatus on the determined date,

wherein a timing of the notification is determined based on a date at which the addition level correction was last conducted and a utilization state of the image processing apparatus.

44. (Original) The maintenance apparatus according to claim 43, wherein the information to be added to the image is added by a visually inconspicuous method.

45. (Original) The maintenance apparatus according to claim 43, wherein the addition level varies in correspondence with deterioration of the image processing apparatus.

46. - 66. (Cancelled)

67. (New) A method comprising the steps of:

receiving date information and addition level information of information to be added to an image by an image forming apparatus which electro-photographically forms a toner image;

determining based on the received information, a date at which notification recommending correction of the addition level is to be sent to the image forming apparatus; and

transmitting the notification to the image processing apparatus on the determined date,

wherein a timing of the notification is determined based on a date at which the addition level correction was last conducted and a utilization state of the image processing apparatus.

68. (New) The method according to claim 67, wherein the information to be added to the image is added by a visually inconspicuous method.

69. (New) The method according to claim 67, wherein the addition level varies in correspondence with deterioration of the image processing apparatus.

70. (New) A computer program product, embodied in a computer-readable medium, for executing a method comprising the steps of:

receiving date information and addition level information of information to be added to an image by an image forming apparatus which electro-photographically forms a toner image;

determining based on the received information, a date at which notification recommending correction of the addition level is to be sent to the image forming apparatus; and

transmitting the notification to the image processing apparatus on the determined date,

wherein a timing of the notification is determined based on a date at which the addition level correction was last conducted and a utilization state of the image processing apparatus.

71. (New) The computer program product according to claim 70, wherein the information to be added to the image is added by a visually inconspicuous method.

72. (New) The computer program product according to claim 70, wherein the addition level varies in correspondence with deterioration of the image processing apparatus.